



# JOHNSONIAN NEWS LETTER

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## THE ART OF LETTER WRITING

In a recent issue of the New York Times Book Review Peter Quennell suggests that because letter writing has ceased with us to be an important branch of literature we are becoming proportionately more attracted to it in the past. Though few today have the time or the inclination to devote to long epistles we are more and more fascinated by those who had. Whether he is wholly right or not, the evidence would at least support the latter part of his claim. The number of important editions of eighteenth-century letters now in progress is impressive. Recently we have had two more volumes of the superb Yale Walpole. The complete collection of Boswell's correspondence is about to get underway, as is the great Burke edition under the supervision of Tom Copeland. George Sherburn's long-expected volumes of Pope's letters are promised for May. Sir Harold Williams is engaged in re-editing Swift's correspondence; and Bob Halsband, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's. These are merely samples. There are many other projects which might also be mentioned -- gathering together the surviving letters of such men as Cowper, Prior, Sheridan, Thomson, and Dr. Burney.

Even when the writer was not a conscious artist, or at least did not have the skill of Horace Walpole, eighteenth-century letters tend to have genuine literary quality. Quennell suggests as a reason that correspondents in that period had a sense of the sacredness of the written word. They were not content merely to scribble careless messages to be dropped into the nearest waste-basket. Even business letters were apt to be written with a certain grave formality.

Consider Edward Gibbon, whose letters have now been admirably edited by Miss J. E. Norton (Cassell in England; Macmillan in U.S.A.). By his own confession he was never a spontaneous correspondent, and his most characteristic opening was one of apology. "I beg ten thousand pardons for not being dead as I certainly ought to be" or "You will think me the most impudent fellow alive: but I am really angry with you for not being angry with me on account of my long shameful silence." A feeling of guilt seems always to have been hanging over him as he remembers the letters he ought to write. And there is no denying that most of his

surviving letters do not contain much sparkle or obvious wit. Nor do they have the majestic irony of the Decline and Fall. Yet they are well written, with a kind of special quality which gives them an undeniable charm. Even with a business letter Gibbon takes pains. If he uses the easy familiar style, he is never careless. His messages have literary distinction. But we will say no more here about Miss Norton's three volumes, for we have reviewed them elsewhere with high praise.

Basic for all of the better eighteenth-century writers was the consciousness of being part of a great tradition. Even when not obviously trying to emulate the older masters of the art, they could not break away completely from what had gone before. What this tradition was has been recently described by W.H. Irving of Duke in the early chapters of his The Providence of Wit in the English Letter Writers (Duke Univ. Press). Cicero and Pliny, Voiture and Mme. de Sévigné meant something to Gibbon and Walpole which has been lost to us -- something which fashioned a particular kind of art that suited the temperament of the age. We in the twentieth century can at least savor that art, though we do not care to emulate it.

Irving's attractive book, with the tantalizing title taken from a phrase by Dryden, is a pleasant and chatty commentary, not a scholarly survey. He makes no attempt at close analysis or detailed criticism. He is not bibliographically minded. He poses as the reader's guide and friend. It is almost as if Irving is standing in a well-stocked library. (And what a library it would be!) conversing amiably about the books with some congenial companion. Now here, he seems to say, is an interesting collection of letters, full of wit and grace. You would enjoy dipping into it. So-and-so's travel letters are atrocious, but for the true, elegant style be sure to see ----. Here is something you may have missed, which really is rewarding. As he handles the volumes lovingly, he bites passages which are characteristic or which he particularly likes -- entertaining squibs, apt phrases, or examples of the classical style. It is all easy and informative. For those who like to chat about authors of another age the book will prove thoroughly enjoyable. And it will be particularly useful for anyone wishing a quick review of the whole genre.

### JOHNSON AND BOSWELL NOTES

McGraw-Hill has now made available in a special box for \$15 the four volumes of Boswell's journals so far issued. Volume V, which will carry Boswell from his return to London in 1766 to the time of his marriage in November 1769, is scheduled for publication next fall. The German tour was issued by Hachette of Paris last fall in a French translation by Celia Bertin, with a Preface by André Maurois. The title was Boswell chez les Princes.

On Sunday December 18 the death of Dr. Johnson was remembered at the morning service at St. John's Pro-



Cathedral in Buenos Aires. Albert Hall-Johnson read one of Johnson's prayers, and the Rector spoke on the influence of Johnson on Oliver Wendell Holmes.

A.H. Scouten sends in a note about a sixteen line poetic apostrophe "To the Author of The Rambler, On Reading his Allegories" which appeared in the London Daily Advertiser, 28 August 1750. Lines 13 and 14 read: "O! born without a Patron to be great, And not design'd to copy but create."

A few recent articles may be mentioned here: C.N. Fifer, "Dr. Johnson and Bennet Langton" in JEGP for October 1955; C.R.B. Ogdon, "Dr. Johnson in Bedfordshire" in Bedfordshire Magazine, Winter 1955-56; W.H. Graham, "Dr. Johnson and Royalty" in Contemporary Review, for January 1956; R.H. Carnie, "Lord Hailes's Notes on Johnson's 'Lives of the Poets'" in N&O for February; Berna Moran, "The Irene Story and Dr. Johnson's Sources" in MLN for February. (For some reason this last fails to mention Bertrand Bronson's admirable discussion of the same problem in his Johnson Agonistes).

Later this spring the University of Illinois Press will publish Arthur Sherbo's Samuel Johnson, Editor of Shakespeare, with an Essay on The Adventurer. This collection of scholarly essays will be of importance to all who are working on Johnson.

#### RASSELAS AND THE MISCELLANIES OF JOHN NORRIS

Louis I. Bredvold (Michigan) sends in the following:

"I believe no one has noted an interesting analogue to the description of Rasselas in the Happy Valley, which is found in a religious meditation by John Norris on the theme that 'tis impossible that any other created good should be the end of man.' To this purpose, writes Norris, 'I call to mind a very remarkable story recorded by Eusebius Nierembergius, in his book De Arte Voluntatis (in margin: lib.6.p.537.), concerning an Eastern Emperour, who was minded to try the same experiment upon his Son as Solomon did upon himself, and to see how far the accommodations of Life might go towards true Felicity. He accordingly train'd him up from his infancy in magnificent apartments, studiously remov'd from him all pitiable objects that he might not have so much as a Notion of misery, humour'd him in every Punctilio, and furnish'd him with whatsoever he either did wish for, or might be suppos'd to take pleasure in; till at length the unfortunately Happy young man observing himself to be still in Desires, and that in a state of all possible worldly affluence, could no longer flatter himself with imaginary Prospects, but concluded that no condition would ever mend the matter, and so fell into extreme Melancholy and Despair.'" (A Collection of Miscellanies, 2nd ed. (1692), p.311.)

To Bredvold's suggestion may be added further proof that Johnson had read Norris before writing Rasselas. A copy of the Miscellanies used by Johnson in compiling the Dictionary is now in the Yale University Library.

### A CORRECTION

H.D. Rowe (Univ. of Florida) comments on the note on page 12 of the September JNL headed "Emerson and Johnson." The "Essay" in question, Rowe adds, "was compiled by Emerson's editor from the notes of a lecture. A glance at the MS shows that Emerson and his editor were not guilty of plagiarism. The error was made by a copyist, and whoever read proof failed to notice it." Rowe adds further "Emerson also used this passage in 'Eloquence' and altered it in another fashion there. Rather than being interesting as plagiarism, it is interesting because it illustrates Emerson's ideas about quotation." This matter is the subject of an article by Rowe to appear soon in the New England Quarterly.

### INDEX TO VOLUMES X-XV

Five years ago, when we had rounded out the first ten years of JNL, a loyal subscriber volunteered to provide a subject index. We gratefully accepted the offer, and, as many of you know, an index was made available. Again we have an offer of help, this time from Katherine Burton of Wheaton College, who is compiling a list of topics referred to in volumes X-XV. We hope to send this to you later in the spring.

### SOME NEW BOOKS

We have just received from the Indiana University Press Irvin Ehrenpreis's separate edition of Swift's An Enquiry into the Behavior of the Queen's Last Ministry. As you may remember, there are two manuscript versions of this tract: one a foul copy almost entirely in Swift's handwriting; another in the hand of an amanuensis, with further corrections in Swift's hand. The second was used as the basis for the text in Vol. VIII of the Shakespeare Head edition. Ehrenpreis now gives a rendering of the first, at the same time indicating the changes made in the other. Not only does he provide an interesting comparison of the two versions, but for the first time annotates thoroughly the various political allusions. He identifies persons, events, and places, and gives what evidence is available concerning the validity of Swift's opinions and their source. For anyone interested in the complex historical maneuverings during the last years of Queen Anne and Swift's connection with them this should be required reading.

Another valuable reference work for those interested



in political events of the period is Robert Walcott's English Politics in the Early Eighteenth Century (Clarendon Press). This is an expansion of Walcott's important essay which was included in the Wilbur Cortez Abbott festschrift in 1941. Here he discusses the electoral system in 1701, gives evidence as to the actual composition of the House of Commons, and of the complicated functioning of the various small party groups during the first decade of the century. There are Appendixes filled with facts and an index of almost fifty pages. For a thorough and detailed study we recommend it heartily to you.

We are indebted to Ted Hilles for pointing out to us the many Johnsonian references in F.L. Lucas's new book entitled Style (Macmillan). We are sure you will find it very stimulating.

J.A.K. Thomson's Classical Influences on English Prose (Allen and Unwin), which follows his earlier volumes on poetry, should be useful for students wishing to brush up on the classical backgrounds of eighteenth-century literature. Included are many sample passages from ancient writers, rendered by the author into easy modern English prose.

Only recently were we able to secure a copy of a little pamphlet Oliver Goldsmith: Essays towards an Interpretation by R. Wyse Jackson, distributed by A.P.C.K., Dawson St., Dublin. It first appeared in 1951.

The most recent of the two shilling "Writers and Their Works," issued by the British Council, is John Dryden by Bonamy Dobrée.

The latest volume of the new edition of Swift's prose, edited by Herbert Davis, is No. XII, Irish Tracts, 1728-1733.

There are four issues from the Augustan Reprint Society to mention: Samuel Say's An Essay on the Harmony, Variety, and Power of Numbers (1745), with introduction by Paul Fussell, Jr.; Theologiae Ruris sive Scholae et Scala Naturae (1686), with Introduction by H.S.V. Ogden; Mary Davys's Familiar Letters Betwixt a Gentleman and a Lady (1725), with Introduction and a bibliography of epistolary fiction, 1660-1740, by Robert A. Day; Fielding's Shamela, with Introduction by Ian Watt. Although there have been recent reprints of Shamela, it is useful to have it finally available in facsimile.

The following books should also be listed: J. Jean Hecht, The Domestic Servant Class in 18th Century England (Routledge and Kegan Paul); H. Butterfield, Man On His Past (Cambridge U.P.); Studies in Social History edited by J.H. Plumb (Longmans); W.S. Scott, Green Retreats: The Story of Vauxhall Gardens, 1661-1859 (Odhams Press);

Constance Rowe, Voltaire and the State (Columbia U.P.); British Union-Catalogue of Periodicals (from 17th century), edited by J.D. Stewart, Muriel E. Hammond, and E. Saenger, Vol. I (A-C) (Butterworth); Arthur M. Hind, Engraving in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries (a descriptive catalogue: Part II, the reign of James I) (Cambridge U.P.); Ralph Edwards and Margaret Jourdain, Georgian Cabinet-Makers, c.1700-1800, new and revised edition (Country Life); Hazard Adams, Blake and Yeats (Cornell Univ. Press).

#### SOME RECENT ARTICLES

Concerned with Dryden there are: James Kinsley, "Historical Allusions in Absalom and Achitophel," in RES for July 1955, and his "The 'Three Glorious Victories' in Annus Mirabilis," in RES for January 1956; Samuel H. Monk, "Dryden's 'Eminent French Critic' in A Parallel of Poetry and Painting" in N&Q for October; Everett Emerson, Harold E. Davis, and Ira Johnson, "Intention and Achievement in All for Love" in College English for November; Austin C. Dobbins, "Dryden's 'Character of a Good Parson,' Background and Interpretation" in SP for January 1956; R.D. Spector, "Dryden's Translation of Chaucer: a Problem in Neo-Classical Diction" in N&Q for January; Cecil C. Seronsy, "Chapman and Dryden" in N&Q for February.

Having to do with the earlier period are: Cyril Hughes Hartmann, "Rochester's Marriage" in History Today for December; Herbert H. Rowen, "A Second Thought on Locke's First Treatise" in JHI for January; David M. Armstrong, "Berkeley's New Theory of Vision" in JHI for January; Harry M. Bracken, "Berkeley and Chambers" in the same issue; Donald Davie, "Berkeley and 'Philosophic Words'" in Studies, Autumn 1955; Henry K. Miller, "The Paradoxical Encomium with Special Reference to Its Vogue in England 1600-1800" in MP for February; David Piper, "John Evelyn and His Diary" in The Listener, January 5, 1956.

Swift is discussed in: Irvin Ehrenpreis, "The Pattern of Swift's Women" in PMLA, for September; T.G. Wilson, "The Death Masks of Dean Swift" in Princeton University Library Chronicle, Spring 1955; Maurice Quinlan, "Swift's Project for the Advancement of Religion" in PMLA for March 1956.

For Pope there are: D.S. Bland, "Pope's Colour-Sense: a Comment" in Durham Univ. Chronicle for June 1955; James M. Osborn, "Pope, the Byzantine Empress, and Walpole's Whore" in RES for October; Malcolm Goldstein, "Pope, Sheffield, and Shakespeare's Julius Caesar" in MLN for January 1956.

Also concerned with the early eighteenth century: Aubrey Williams, "Welsted's Lines to the Duke of Buckingham" in N&Q for November; John M. Aden, "More



'Georgics' Echoes in 'Cyder' in the same issue; Frederick Staver, "'Sublime' as Applied to Nature" in the same issue; A.D. McKillop, "James Thomson's Juvenile Poems" in Newberry Library Bulletin for November; Spiro Peterson, "Defoe's Yorkshire Quarrel" in HLO for November; J.H. Plumb, "Nobility and Gentry in the Early Eighteenth Century" in History Today for December; H. Bunker Wright, "Prior and Gildon" in N&Q for January 1956; Dennis Davison, "Francis Jessop" in the same issue.

There are three having to do with the theater: John Loftis, "The London Theatres in Early Eighteenth-Century Politics" in Huntington Library Quarterly for August; and his "The Social Milieu of Early-Eighteenth-Century Comedy" in MP for November; John Harold Wilson, "Rant, Cant, and Tone on the Restoration Stage" in SP for October.

For those interested in fiction: Arthur H. Scouten, "An Early Printed Report on the Apparition of Mrs. Veal" in RES for July; Allan H. MacLaine, "Robinson Crusoe and the Cyclops" in SP for October; Christopher Hill, "Clarissa Harlowe and Her Times" in Essays in Criticism for October; William Scott, "Smollett, Dr. John Hill, and the Failure of Peregrine Pickle" in N&Q for September; Kelsie B. Harder, "Genealogical Satire in Humphry Clinker" in N&Q for October; A.D. McKillop, "Richardson's First Book" in Newberry Library Bulletin for November; John Lawler, "Radical Satire and the Realistic Novel" in Essays and Studies of the English Ass'n for 1955; Sidney J. Black, "Eighteenth-Century 'Histories' as a Fictional Mode" in the new publication in Boston University Studies in English, Spring-Summer 1955; George Sherburn, "Fielding's Social Outlook" in PQ for January 1956; R. Baird Shuman, "Censorship as a Controlling Theme in 'Pamela' and 'Clarissa'" in N&Q for January; J.M. Stedmond, "Uncle Toby's 'Campaigns' and Raree-Shows" in the same issue; Louis T. Milic, "Sterne and Smollett's 'Travels'" in N&Q for February; Ben Reid, "The Sad Hilarity of Sterne" in Va. Quart. Review, Winter 1956.

For the mid-century: Arundell Esdaile, "Thomas Gray" in Quart. Review for October; W. Powell Jones, "Mute Inglorious Gray" in Emory University Quarterly for December; Morris Golden, "Goldsmith and the Present State of Russia and France" in N&Q for September; and his "Goldsmith and 'National Concord'" in N&Q for October; Arthur Sherbo, "Christopher Smart, Free and Accepted Mason" in JEGP for October; Wallace Cable Brown, "A Belated Augustan: Bonnell Thornton, Esq." in PQ for July; C.M. Lombard, "Young and the 'Meditations Poetique'" in N&Q for September; Clifton Cherpak, "Warburton and the Encyclopedie" in Comparative Literature, Summer 1955; F.H. Amphlet Mickelwright, "Sir Francis Dashwood and an Abridged Book of Common Prayer" in N&Q for October; Vedder M. Gilbert, "An Early Return to Chivalry in the Eighteenth Century" in N&Q for October; Robert D. Spector, "Eighteenth-Century Political Controversy and Linguistics" in N&Q for September; M.F. Lloyd-Prichard, "The Education of the

Poor in Norfolk, 1700-1850" in N&O for October; H. Rossiter Smith, "John Gough the Blind Philosopher, 1757-1825" in N&O for September; Virgil R. Stallbaumer, "Hazlitt's Life of Thomas Holcroft" in American Benedictine Review, Spring 1954; Geoffrey W. Beard, "Notes on George Lyttelton of Hagley" in Worcestershire Archaeological Society (1955); R.G. Howarth, "Gray and Green" in N&O for January 1956; H.C. Cardew-Rendle "James Colebrooke: a Forgotten Figure in Insurance" in the same issue; Claude E. Jones, "The Critical Review's First Thirty Years" in N&O for February; George B. Schick, "Kind Hints" to John Nichols by Joseph Warton and Others" in the same issue; Dorothea D. Reeves, "Sir Richard Gough and His Broadside Collection" in Harvard Library Bulletin for Winter 1956; John B. Shipley, "Franklin Attends a Book Auction" in Pa. Magazine of History and Biography for January. Two articles which we hitherto have missed are by Cecil Price: "Some New Light on Chesterfield" in Neuphilologische Mitteilungen (1953), 5-6; and "Further Chesterfield Gleanings" in the same journal (1955), 3-4.

Of special interest is the December issue of the Journal of Aesthetic and Art Criticism devoted largely to discussions of the Baroque style in the various arts.

Sometime you ought to look at the periodical The Rising Generation, published in Tokyo. Some of the articles are in English, others in Japanese. Many of them have to do with our period: on such subjects as Swift's Modest Proposal, Tristram Shandy, Gray's De Principiis Cogitandi, Defoe's Complete English Tradesman, the poetry of The World. And these only list a few.

#### MISCELLANEOUS NEWS ITEMS

At the meeting of the Modern Language Ass'n in Washington next December the Group VIII topic will be "The Works of Samuel Johnson." Certainly a timely topic, as the new Yale Edition gets underway. Those wishing to have papers considered should send them at an early date to the Chairman, J.E. Congleton (Univ. of Florida, Gainesville, Florida) or to the Secretary, F.W. Hilles (Yale).

On January 26 the American Council of Learned Societies scheduled a series of panel discussions in Washington D.C. on the topic "Progress and Survival: Present-day Relevance of Eighteenth-Century Thought." Howard Mumford Jones (Harvard) was General Chairman. The Program for the three panel sessions follows: I. Theories of Man: Daniel Boorstin (Chicago), "History Through Bifocal Glasses"; Walter L. Dorn (Ohio State), "Does the United States Still Need the Eighteenth Century?"; Peter I. Gay (Princeton) "Light on the Enlightenment"; Ernest C. Mossner (Texas), "Hume: the Voice of the Enlightenment." II. Origins of the American State: Mark DeW. Howe (Harvard), "The Psychology and Language of Freedom"; Leo Gershow (N.Y.U.) "Rousseau and the



Political Mind"; Louis N. Gottschalk (Chicago), "The Revolutionary Tradition"; Richard B. Morris (Columbia), "The Present Validity of Eighteenth-Century Doctrines of the State". III. Theories of Art and Aesthetics: George Boas (Johns Hopkins), "The Unfashionable Concept of Ideal Nature"; Herbert Dieckmann (Harvard), "The Twilight of Classical Aesthetics"; Paul Henry Lang (Columbia), "The Idea of Form in 'Classic' Music"; Maynard Mack (Yale), "The Quick and the Dead." Barnaby C. Keeney, President of Brown University, also addressed the entire group. Ernest Mossner writes that the whole affair was "most interesting, but most strenuous."

We lament the passing of Percy J. Dobell, who died the 23d of January. For those of us who were particularly interested in the late 17th and early 18th centuries he was a constant source of information and help. "Enlightened Bookseller," his son calls him, and so he was. The business will be carried on at Tunbridge Wells by Robert John Dobell.

Donald C. Bryant (Washington University, St. Louis) has become the editor of the Quarterly Journal of Speech. He writes that he will welcome articles touching on rhetorical problems or anything having to do with speech or public address in eighteenth-century England. He would also be glad to see articles concerned with pronunciation or speech problems in the theater.

Station WTIC in Hartford, Conn., this winter has been having a series of Sunday evening broadcasts on the topic, "Editing the Papers of Great Men." Included in the program were W.S. Lewis on Horace Walpole, and Fred Pottle on Boswell.

We were sorry to miss the M.L.A. Meetings in Chicago last December, but we have had enthusiastic reports of the Group VII and Group VIII programs. A.H. Scouten writes that about 500 attended the earlier group to hear Quintana, Kelling, and Crane, and that they sat through the entire program instead of walking in and out, as so frequently occurs at M.L.A. meetings. For Group VIII, in a smaller room, the crowd overflowed into a kind of ante-room where those who could not get in could hear Frye, Keast, and MacLean over loudspeakers.

We are delighted to hear that James Sutherland is coming over to this country next June, and Herbert Davis in December. We look forward eagerly to seeing them.

J.R. Vigne (P.O. Box 396, Cape Town, South Africa) is interested in the painter George Chinnery who was born in Gough Square, London, in 1774. Any information about him will be welcomed.

Peter Cochrene (107 Beaufort St., London S.W. 3) is working on the printer William Strahan, and we are certain would be very happy to get in touch with any American scholars who may have special information about him or about the location of any of his papers.

On April 24, 25, 26, 27 Columbia University is to hold a bicentenary Mozart Festival. The theme will be "Mozart, His Life and Times." There will be an exhibit of manuscripts, scores, and pictures in the Low Memorial Library (in the Rotunda and in Room 412) from April 2-27, brought together by Henry Wells. There will be public lectures by Professors Erich Hertzmann and Paul H. Lang on the afternoons of April 13 and 24. The evening concerts will be given by The Mozarteum Orchestra of Salzburg and the Little Orchestra Society. For information about the program write to the Columbia Music Dept.

You may perhaps have heard already that the M.L.A. annual bibliography will henceforth have international coverage. A special Association Bibliographer is to be appointed, whose duty it will be to coordinate the work of a large number of helpers. You will hear more about this later.

As usual, we welcome Louis Wright's interesting Report from the Folger Library for March 1, the News Letter from the Institute of Early American History and Culture at Williamsburg, Max Patrick's Seventeenth-Century News, and the new HINL.

#### A REQUEST

Johnson Ball, Queen's College, Red Hill, Stourbridge, Worcestershire, would welcome news of any engravings, paintings, or letters relating to the Green family of Halesowen, Worcestershire. Amos Green (1734-1807) was patronized by William Shenstone who said of him in 1761: "I know not any person in England that exceeds Green" (in still life painting of flowers, insects, and dead game). James and Benjamin Green were engravers to the University of Oxford, and James also became engraver to the Society of Antiquaries following the death of George Vertue. Ball published a pioneer study of these men in 1951 and since that date has been working on a fuller study of this talented artistic family.

#### COMING BOOKS

The following have been announced for early publication: Ellen Douglass Leyburn, Satiric Allegory: the Mirror of Man (Yale); Richard Gimbel, Bibliographical Check List of Thomas Paine's Common Sense (Yale);



W.B. Ewald, The Newsmen of Queen Anne (Blackwell); The Merry Muses of Caledonia: the Crochallan Song Book, edited by DeLancey Ferguson, James Barke, and Sydney G. Smith (The Auk Society, Edinburgh); John Dryden: Selections, edited by Edward Hooker and H.T. Swedenberg (Houghton Mifflin, Riverside Edition); James Kinsley, Scottish Poetry: a Critical Survey.

We have no further word of the publication date of the first volume of the new California edition of the works of John Dryden.

### JOHNSON AND FALSTAFF

Richard Purdum (Univ. of Illinois) has sent in the following:

"When Dr. Johnson, in his edition of Shakespeare, commented: 'But Falstaff unimitated, unimitable Falstaff, how shall I describe thee?' (note on 2 Henry IV, 5. 5. 97), was he recalling line 261 of Sheffield's Essay on Poetry (1682-1713);

But Falstaff stands unimitable yet,  
with Sheffield's revision (1717):

But Falstaff stands unimitated yet?

Johnson used both of Sheffield's adjectives and gave evidence later, in his Life of Sheffield, that he was aware of variant readings ('...there is scarcely any poem to be found of which the last edition differs more from the first.' Lives of the Poets, ed. Cunningham (1854), II 196). In his 'edition' (1723), Pope changed the word to 'inimitable.'

### JOHNSON AND A NOTE BY WARBURTON

Arthur Sherbo (Illinois) comments:

"If I were to say of Dr. Johnson that 'his style is copious without selection, and forcible without neatness; he took the words that presented themselves: his diction is coarse and impure, and his sentences are unmeasured, some readers would exclaim that I had taken leave of my senses; others, blessed with very keen memories, would recognize that I was quoting Dr. Johnson's criticism of William Warburton's style (in the Life of Pope). Yet Johnsonians have accepted without question some two pages of Warburton's prose as Johnson's. I refer to a note on Edmund's speech in King Lear. 'This is the excellent foppery of the world.' The note appears unsigned in Johnson's first, second, and third editions of Shakespeare's plays; it is correctly assigned to Warburton, from whose edition of Shakespeare it is taken, in the 1773 Johnson-Stevens variorum. The note, a long one even for Warburton, is reprinted in Walter Raleigh's Johnson on Shakespeare and in Mona Wilson's Johnson, Prose and

Poetry - as Johnson's. Since these books are readily accessible I shall quote only one choice sentence; interested readers will want to examine the whole note:

'Nor could the licentious Rabelais himself forbear to ridicule this impious dotage, which he does with exquisite address and humour, where, in the fable which he so agreeably tells from AEsop, of the man who applied to Jupiter for the loss of his hatchet, he makes those, who, on the poor man's good success, had projected to trick Jupiter by the same petition, a kind of astrologick atheists, who ascribed this good fortune, that they imagined they were now all going to partake of, to the influence of some rare conjunction and configuration of the stars.'

It is very humbling to reflect that anyone, at any time, could accept this monstrosity as the product of Dr. Johnson's mind and pen."

### SOME ADDITIONAL ARTICLES

To be listed are: Lawrence E. Padgett, "Dryden's Edition of Corneille" in MLN for March; Carl R. Woodring, "The Aims, Audience, and Structure of the Drapier's Fourth Letter" in MLQ for March; Aline M. Taylor, "Swift's Use of the Term 'Canary Bird'" in MLN for March; Robert J. Allen, "Swift's Contests and Dissentions in Boston" in New England Quarterly for March; William B. Todd, "Concealed Pope Editions" in The Book Collector for Spring 1956;

Arthur Sherbo, "The Probable Time of Composition of Christopher Smart's Song to David, Psalms, and Hymns and Spiritual Songs" in JEGP for January; and his "Christopher Smart, Reader of Obituaries" in MLN for March; D.F. Foxon, "Akenside's The Pleasures of Imagination" in The Book Collector for Spring 1956; John Sparrow, "Some Uncollected Authors, IX: Samuel Parr (1747-1825)" in the same journal; James Allison, "Mrs Thrale's Marginalia in Joseph Warton's Essay" in HLO for February; Richard Gimbel, "New Political Writings by Thomas Paine" in Yale University Library Gazette for January.

There are two interesting articles on Swift in the most recent number of Literature and Psychology (News Letter of the M.L.A. Conference on Literature and Psychology): "A Freudian View of Jonathan Swift" by Donald R. Roberts; and a review of Phyllis Greenacre's Swift and Carroll by Frederick Wyatt, Deborah Bacon, and Arthur M. Eastman.